

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES TO WATCH

Heeia Elementary School

Heeia Elementary School	
Urbanicity: Suburban	Percentage of All Students Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch: 44%
Location: Kaneohe, Hawaii	Demographics: Asian/Hawaiian: 81%, White: 14%, Hispanic: 4%, Black: 1%
Grades: K-6	Hours of 21st CCLC Program Operation: Monday through Thursday, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
21st CCLC Enrollment: 57	

Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships Opportunity Conditions Addressed
Process Conditions: Linked to Learning Interactive
Organizational Conditions: Systemic

Using Technology to Support Multigenerational Family Engagement

Heeia Elementary School is a multigenerational school, with ohana, or extended family, playing an important role in the school community. Family engagement must be worth families' time, especially in a community where many parents work two jobs.

Importance of Food in Creating Community with Family

Food is essential. "When families get together to eat, there's dialogue, there's community. Just like in your family, people gather around food," says Helene Tom, 21st CCLC Program Director. Food builds community. It is also practical, ensuring that families are well fed and taken care of. Principals

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and teachers make sure all family-focused events are informative, exciting for kids, and have helpful takeaways for families.

Digital Media Tools to Support Children's Learning

A major focus of family engagement is teaching families how to use digital data platforms to understand and stay informed about their children's learning. One such tool, *Achieve 300*, helps families understand their children's reading levels and Lexile scores. Families are taught what the scores mean and how to guide a child's learning, including ensuring that children read for longer periods each day and that parents review vocabulary with their children. It also includes tools to help parents communicate with their children/grandchildren. Family members can select stories or articles or write a letter and put it in the mailbox. A similar digital platform for math learning helps family members understand their child's math level and scores linked to state metrics. It also identifies practical techniques to help with learning at home. Families learn how to access and navigate both systems on their smartphones to help with awareness of student's daily work. "We want our children to hear these references at home, just like they do with their teachers," says Principal Alma Souki. Literacy best practices are reinforced through other technology, such as a free Scholastic app, Book Wizard, that helps families pick reading material for children with the appropriate Lexile score and reading fluency level. As families become familiar with Heeia Elementary's technology, they gain new transferable technology skills.

TIPS FOR PROMISING PRACTICES

- **Connect with families like you do with your own.**
 - o Provide food and meals when you can; and invite families to prepare food for a potluck when you can't. Food can go a long way in welcoming families and can serve as a connector between families and staff.
- **Use technology to help families understand and connect with their children's academic progress.**
 - o Bring families to the computer lab at your site. There, lead hands-on tutorials and practice sessions using technology connected to children's academic development.

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LESSONS LEARNED

- When teaching families with technology tools, provide a space and time for them to learn and connect. While it can be fun and interactive for children and families to learn new technology tools and practice using them together, adults need their own space and time to go through tools step-by-step. This is especially true when adults are learning how to read and use data pertaining to their children's academic learning. Do not assume all families are comfortable using technology. Some families might need additional support and encouragement when learning new skills.

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